

MID-MARYLAND  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA  
2009 AARA PLAN

(Attachment V)

**SECTION I. Vision and Strategy**

**Economic and Labor Market Context**

The labor market has changed during the past year. The Mid-Maryland area has fared better than other parts of the state; however, it is still impacted by the downturn in the economy. The unemployment rate in Mid-Maryland has almost doubled in the past year. In March of 2009 the unemployment rate for Mid-Maryland was 5.7% as compared to 2.9% in March of 2008. With that being said, there are still some areas of anticipated growth in the WIA. There have been some changes to the LMI data since the last Plan but they are not extensive. Some of our data is based on anecdotal information. Often times the direct communication with companies and recruiters poses the most accurate data. Members of the WIA staff have been in contact with many businesses in the area. In at least part of the WIA there are some areas of expected growth in targeted industries. There are currently or we expect there to be growth in several of the following occupations.

Construction

Electrician/Electrician helper

HVACR

Plumber

Green Jobs (anticipated growth based on Carroll County projections)

Geothermal Heat Pump Machinist

Residential Energy field Auditor

Weatherization Specialist

Manufacturing (based on information from the Carroll County manufacturing consortium)

Auto Cad Technicians

CNC Machinists

Industrial Maintenance

Machine Operator

Reliability Engineering

Robotics technician

Pneumatic control Operator

Healthcare (based on Carroll community college training projections)

CNAs

Dental Hygienist

Information Technology

Electronics Technicians

High level software engineers

Telecommunication line installers

Professional & Business Services

Drafters, engineering & mapping technicians

Engineers – mechanical, Industrial, Electrical, computer, materials

Technical writing

Video surveillance security equipment installation

We would be remiss in Mid-Maryland not to mention the impact we expect from BRAC. We anticipate at least 22,000 jobs moving to Ft. Meade as a result of Ft. Meade growth and in excess of 60,000 jobs across Maryland. The BRAC relocations are required to be completed by September 30, 2011. The components of BRAC across Ft. Meade are:

- BRAC: 5,695 New work positions
- NSA: 4,000 New work positions
- EUL: 10,000 New work positions
- Additional DOD growth: 2,000 New work positions

DISA, the largest federal agency moving to Ft. Meade has a diverse workforce. According to a Presentation given by Jack Penkoske, Director, Manpower, Personnel and Security on April 28, 2009 the breakdown of jobs relocating with DISA is:

Engineer – 18%

Scientist – 15%

Telecom specialist – 20%

IT Specialists – 32%

Other (including financial, program management, personnel, contracting, etc) – 18%

The impact of DISA's move is 4,272 FTE and an additional 3000-5000 contractors. From discussions with the relocating agencies, federal contractors, and even a presentation given by NSA, DISA, and three contractor representatives as recently as April 1, 2009 this is reflective of the types of positions that will grow in the area. Based on this information we are already in contact with these organizations to help them fill their workforce needs. We participate in several regional committees. For example, the Ft. Meade Regional Growth Management Committee, BWI Partnership, and Ft. Meade Alliance. What we hear consistently in this region is the need for a STEM workforce currently and in the future. What does not get as much attention, yet is still necessary, is the fact that even though much of the expected growth is in "professional" occupations there is still a need for support positions with the BRAC expansion such as administrative, human resources, janitorial....

On the downside of the economy the number of Rapid Responses has increased in the Mid-Maryland Area. In calendar year 2008 the Mid-Maryland WIA had 4 WARN notices impacting 316 people. Thus far in calendar year 2009 we've had 7 WARN notices impacting 636 people. These numbers only include companies that have filed WARN notices; it is not inclusive of the smaller layoffs where staff has responded. Whenever possible, the staff tries to produce some type of job openings for the impacted workers when doing the Rapid Response. We believe it eases the impact just a bit for individuals to know there are some job opportunities available.

*LWIBS vision for ensuring continuum of education and training opportunities to support a skilled workforce*

The Mid-Maryland WIA will continue to ensure a continuum of education and training to support a skilled workforce. If one institution of higher ed. in the region offers a unique program we may partner with other WIAs to put individuals in training so that the region can benefit from the enhanced skills of its labor force. We plan to increase the use of assessments for the business community to ensure a demonstrated skill match/attainment and a better match for hiring. We continue to examine employment expansion and contractions in the WIA and region based on economic development data and LMI. In areas where we see expansion we are continuing to prepare the workforce. We're very involved with BRAC in this region and intend to prepare workers to fill the STEM and other BRAC related jobs. As we determine the need, we are considering contract training to support workforce development.

LWIB Youth

We intend to spend the majority of our funds on the summer youth program. However, we intend to reach out to those disconnected youth we have difficulty engaging and informing them about our year around services. We expect to expend approximately 90% of the ARRA youth funds during the summer of 2009. Through promoting our summer youth program we expect more people to learn about the other youth services and opportunities we provide. Summer employment opportunities may provide a career option for youth that they had not previously considered. We can work with the youth to obtain further information about the career if they are interested. We anticipate that some youth may remain with the employer beyond the summer program. The summer program may be a starting point for a career pathway for some disconnected youth.

#### Local Strategies

##### Service delivery Strategies, Support for Training

##### *Maximize resources, increase serve levels, improve service quality, and achieve better integration*

As a result of the ARRA funding in Mid-Maryland we plan to increase services to workers in need. Planned efforts to accomplish this include hiring additional staff to provide core, intensive and training services. We currently have staff integrated in all One Stops; Wagner Peyser staff primarily provides Core services and WIA staff primarily provides Intensive and Training level services. However, all staff are capable of providing Core services. In one One-Stop we are contemplating cross-training ARRA funded staff to provide a full array of services. We are discussing stationing staff part of the time at other locations in the community outside of the One Stop. This will allow us to maximize resources while increasing service to more individuals and provide even further integration of the staff.

In the Mid-Maryland WIA we plan to provide needs based and needs related payments as necessary to Adults and Dislocated Workers. The needs based payments may be used to assist with transportation and child care while in training. We may help with funding driver's education due to the lack of public transportation in the Area. Needs related payments may be made available to those individuals that have exhausted unemployment insurance benefits.

We have already increased the number of EI workshops being held in Mid-Maryland. In the near future we will have more supplemental workshops focused on resume and interviewing techniques. We are considering out-stationing staff at other locations in the Area to increase easy access to services. We fully intend to support our One Stop Career Center customers in acquiring the skills needed to attain jobs in high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations. The Carroll county office of the Mid-Maryland WIA is part of the county's Economic Development department. This connection facilitates easy access to businesses that are expanding, and moving into the county. As part of this relationship it is easy to identify high-growth industries.

Howard County is one mile from Ft. Meade which is expecting 22,000 jobs by 2011 as a result of BRAC 2005 and NSA expansion. We are very involved with the organizations relocating to area and have on-going discussions regarding potential manpower growth needs.

Both Mid-Maryland offices are co-located with their local Adult Education providers. Adult Ed is located in the BERC building and one staff person has an office at HCC. We work very closely with the community colleges to provide ESOL and basic skills classes. This is even further facilitated by having representatives from both community colleges on the WIB.

In Mid-Maryland we only provide training for skills that will enhance the marketability of our customers and are in demand in the local labor market. We intend to support the local area, state and nation in developing a pipeline of workers in green industries while enhancing the competitiveness of the unemployed individuals that need to get back to work quickly to meet their own financial demands. As part of the services we provide, assessments are available in the One Stops such as: Careerscope, Onet, Caps, Cops & Copes, skill check, Quiz and other on-line assessments that are free of charge. We plan to explore additional assessments that may assist us in targeting and maximizing training investments and make a determination as to their value once we review them.

As a demand-driven system we support the needs of the local and regional economy. We expect to convene focus groups based on high-growth, high-demand industries and identify their needs so that we can respond to current and future career opportunities. One idea we anticipate implementing is to convene the focus groups of industry-specific employers to identify their workforce needs and explain how we may be able to respond to them. We also plan to poll and interview other industry associations such as manufacturing consortiums, tech councils, and building associations to support the green initiatives. Within a few weeks of the initial meeting we hope to bring them back again and have them “interview” potential workers so they may provide an apprenticeship or on the job training.

We also plan to have additional employer workshops to address any hiring challenges/needs they may be facing and inform them of opportunities under ARRA not otherwise addressed.

We aim to identify interest areas for youth and place them with worksites that most closely match their interests. Some worksites have discussed keeping youth on after the summer depending on how their experience works out (if money for salary is available) or funding additional hours throughout the summer beyond the work experience.

In Mid-Maryland we plan to align workforce activities with education strategies and economic and community development strategies for the region. As mentioned earlier, BRAC is a key component of the regional economy. We plan to work with other WIAs in the region to assist in filling the workforce shortage. Although many jobs require security clearances there are some which do not. For those positions we may tap into the underutilized populations for recruitment.

## Section II Service Delivery

### Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

#### Local strategies and policies to ensure universal access to core services

We currently have universal access in the One-Stops and plan to continue to do so. We allow everyone to access Core services and do not require documentation when someone enters our Centers. We provide information throughout the community for individuals to access MWE from any computer with connection to the Internet. We currently have two individuals at one of the local DSS offices through another DLLR grant. This DSS office is 2 blocks from one of the One Stops and DSS customers are encouraged, and sometimes required to access the One Stop services. We provide outreach to the Department of Corrections, local homeless shelter and a Multi-service center that serves many economically disadvantaged individuals.

#### Integrate resources under WP and WIA and other partners

In all Mid-Maryland One Stops co-location exists with the WP staff. In one location WIA, WP, DORS and POAC all reside together on a full-time basis. In this location, Job Corp has a regular presence, as well. As mentioned earlier there is staff at the community college and DSS offices. At another location, WP, WIA and Adult Ed. are housed in the same facility. At present, through our work with DSS, we access their funding for training of participants prior to accessing WIA training funds. The goal of our contract is to assist individuals in obtaining meaningful employment/work experience. To achieve this end, we only support training which is marketable in the region and leads to family sufficiency. The local community college works with the LWIA to provide access to training for individuals through grants and scholarship when possible if funds are not available or sufficient.

#### LWIBs vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including WIA title I funds and leveraging other funds Locals use contracts to maximize funds

In meeting with the high-growth/high demand businesses in the area, we will provide contract training if that fulfills a local need which is current or expected. If there is a demand for a specific training in the region and we cannot fill a classroom on our own we may work with our partner WIAS in the region to fill the class size training. We expect there to be numerous regional efforts around the ARRA funds especially for the defense, green and healthcare industries. For example, if Carroll County governments proceed with plans for home energy improvement through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block grants to local jurisdictions, then the WIA may train home energy auditors to fulfill this need. We feel in some cases the whole may be more effective than the sum of its parts.

#### Board's plan for investment in training and supportive services (percentage of ARRA Adult and dislocated Worker funds targeted toward Training and supportive services)

We plan to target 50% of our funds towards training Adult and Dislocated Worker based on the needs of the labor market, assessments, employer focus groups and regional labor market demand. As stated earlier we would like to increase the assessments used and provide additional services which will require additional staff.

### Youth Services

Describe LWIB strategy for providing comprehensive integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need.

At least 90% of the Recovery Act funds for youth are being spent on a summer program in the summer of 2009 serving approximately 56 youth in the Area, i.e. 56 employment opportunities. The program will be run in-house with temporary staff hired to assist in monitoring the worksites. The program design will have some standard components for WIA eligible youth regardless of whether they are younger or older/in or out of school. Summer youth will participate in job readiness workshops, have a pre- and post work readiness indicator assessment and have a staff person be their counselor/advisor on work issues. The youth will be provided a work readiness training which will include information on what is expected at the workplace. A portion of which may be conducted by the HR department on how to complete the required paperwork, payroll and expectations. Youth will be required to fill out an application and indicate their area(s) of interest then be screened by the youth coordinator. The youth will be interviewed for the worksites and approved by the hiring supervisor.

In Mid-Maryland we intend to use a combination of worksites and types of worksites including government, private and non-profit. Half of the summer youth will be placed at Springfield hospital in various types of jobs ranging from landscaping to patient care to office positions. We anticipate the remaining youth having summer work experiences with Howard county government offices, perhaps the Columbia Association and some private sector employers. We also hope to work with the GWIB to obtain at least 5 summer work experience slots in IT to potential career-path some youth and head in the direction of impacting the regional STEM shortage. The employers will need to address the skills to be learned and describe the work site, and the pre-and post assessment will help evaluate skills learned. We expect the staff to visit the sites at least twice per week to troubleshoot any issues and identify the occupational skills being taught on the job. We presume all of the above will lead to meaningful work experiences and occupational learning.

In parts of the WIA we are providing transportation to and from the worksite for the participants to support the out of school youth. During the non-summer months we will continue to provide needs based payments and/or supportive services, as funding permits, to this population such as expansion of driver's ed. training or incentives for program completion.

### Veteran's Priority of Service

LWIB policies ensure covered persons are identified at point of entry.

Each individual that comes into the One Stop self-identifies if they are a veteran on a sign in sheet. The sign-in sheets are distributed to the DVOP when the veteran does not want immediate assistance. The DVOP contacts the veteran via telephone or email and invites the veteran to take advantage of the services of the One Stop. During the initial contact the DVOP provides a brief phone orientation and invitation for a comprehensive assessment. The LVER/DVOP staff periodically searches the MWE for veterans or veteran's spouse that self-identify then contacts them using the same process. In the EI workshops the LVER or DVOP presents on veterans services.

1. LWIB policies ensure that covered persons are aware of:

- a. Entitlement to priority of service.
- b. Full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service;

See #1 above. During the E.I. workshop the veterans are physically shown the poster indicating they receive priority of service. The same poster is in the lobby of the One Stop. All information sheets created by the Mid-Maryland One Stop Centers indicate that vets receive priority of service.

LWIB policy Veterans Priority of Service Policy

c. Mid-Maryland has adopted a Priority of Service policy that is two-fold to address both the veterans' priority provisions of the Jobs for Veterans' Act and the policy that is triggered by fiscal benchmarks.

Veterans and spouses are entitled to priority of service under any qualified job training program if the person otherwise meets the program eligibility requirements. The Jobs for Veterans' Act policy is constant and has the following priority levels:

- Veterans who are on welfare or are low income (LLSIL).
- Spouses of veterans as detailed below under the Jobs for Veterans Act.
- Welfare recipients or other low-income people, as established by the LLSIL.
- Veterans not receiving public assistance or who are low-income.

Eligible spouses as referred to above are spouses of any of the following:

- A veteran who died of a service-connected disability.
- A veteran who has a total service connected disability.
- Any veteran who died while undergoing evaluation for a disability.
- An active duty Armed Forces member who for a total of more than 90 days has been MIA (missing in action) or a POW (prisoner of war).



Application of the triggered priority of service is determined by obligations and expenditures, with quarterly benchmarks at 25%, 50%, and 75%. If the obligations/expenditures are exceeded and there are insufficient funds, the following categories of participants will be provided services according to the priority levels.

**First Priority Level:**

- First, to veterans who are on welfare or are low-income (LLSIL).
- Spouses of veterans as detailed above under the Jobs for Veterans Act.
- Welfare recipients or other low-income people, as established by the LLSIL.
- Veterans not receiving public assistance or who are low-income.

Services delivery to Targeted Populations

Describe the strategy the LWIB will use to effectively implement the Recovery Act priority of service for Low-income individuals

We currently provide outreach to many agencies that work with low income individuals. The WIA director is a member of the local self sufficiency board which has representatives from many community agencies that serve low-income individuals. We have representatives providing outreach to DSS, Corrections, FIRN (Foreign Born Information Referral Network) and the local homeless shelter. Our veteran's representatives provide outreach to organizations that specifically serve veterans. We also work with our local agencies serving seniors. DORS is co-located in one of the One Stops full time and Mid-Maryland has Disability Navigator. With all of the outreach the Centers are doing, we plan to provide priority with our very limited ARRA Adult funds to these populations

Additionally, the Howard County Office in conjunction with the Board of Education and Office of Disability Services held its second annual Career Exploration Day for students with disabilities. These students are partnered with a "mentor" at a county agency for half of a day to learn what the employee does on his/her job. This program has been publicly supported by both the county Chief Administrative Officer who has requested it continue annually.

Section III. OperationsTransparency and Public Comment

How we will make the Plan available to the public and the outcome of the local's review of the resulting public comments

Local efforts to promote transparency

We plan to post the ARRA plan on several websites including the Mid-Maryland WIB site, and Howard and Carroll County local office sites. We will post it in the lobby of the One Stop Centers and post the announcement that it is available for public comment in some local

publications. If we receive any public comment well will post the comments in the lobbies of the One Stops and Mid-Maryland WIB sites at a minimum.

### Monitoring and Oversight

The grants are being tracked separately through the county accounting system and grants office. Additionally, time is being allocated separately on the staff timesheets. At Springfield hospital the summer coordinator will be working on site for constant monitoring during the 6 weeks and at other site the coordinator will be there at least twice per week.